United Nations A/ES-10/629–S/2014/381

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
30 May 2014

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 29 May 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to alert you to the critical situation and continuously rising tensions in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, as a result of Israel's relentless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people. On a daily basis, the occupying Power persists with its grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, which include rampant settlement activities, military raids, systematic detention and arrest of Palestinians, constant provocations, including incitement at holy sites and the destruction of Palestinian property by extremist Israeli settlers, and the suffocating blockade on the Gaza Strip. All of these violations exacerbate conditions on the ground, intensifying the hardships faced by the Palestinian people and solidifying doubts about Israel's so-called desire for peace.

In this regard, I would like first to address Israel's relentless policy of incitement and provocations against holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, namely at Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary), which houses the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Qubbat al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock). In a dangerous development, Israeli provocations at this sensitive area have escalated in frequency and intensity. On 27 May 2014, thousands of Jewish extremists, including 30 rabbis, set out to march through the Old City to celebrate so-called Jerusalem Day, marking Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967. As a result, clashes broke out between Palestinian worshippers and Israeli "border police" and "special units" accompanying the Jewish extremists. During the clashes, Israeli occupying forces fired stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets at innocent Palestinian worshippers, attacking some with pepper spray. Many Palestinians were injured by rubber-coated bullets and a 68-year-old Palestinian man was severely beaten.

In addition to the above-mentioned human rights violations, the occupying forces also violated the right to worship by preventing hundreds of Palestinian men and women from accessing Al-Aqsa Mosque to perform morning prayers. We reiterate

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our cautionary appeals, drawing attention to the dangers of such continuous provocations and incitement in or near Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first *qibla* and third holiest site in Islam, which remains under the supervision of the Islamic Waqf and the custodianship of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Further provocations will only inflame the already elevated tensions and anger among the Palestinian population, threatening to completely destabilize the situation on the ground, with far-reaching consequences.

Accordingly, all such acts of incitement against holy sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as acts of deliberate provocation against the Palestinian people by the occupying Power, whether by the Government of Israel, its occupying forces or its illegal settlers, warrant the serious and immediate attention of the international community, including the Security Council, in line with its primary Charter duty of the maintenance of international peace and security and in line with its numerous relevant resolutions calling for a cessation of all Israeli measures aimed at altering the character, legal status and demography of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including of East Jerusalem.

I must also bring to your attention the critical situation of Palestinian political prisoners illegally imprisoned and detained by Israel. Thousands of Palestinians, among them women and children, continue to be held in deplorable conditions and subjected to grave human rights violations. In particular, I must underscore the plight of hundreds of prisoners who have been on a hunger strike for more than five weeks in protest of their unlawful detention. These detainees are starving themselves and risking their lives in peaceful, non-violent protest of their detention without charge and of the massive abuses being perpetrated against them and their fellow prisoners by the occupying Power. Currently, more than 40 Palestinian detainees on hunger strike have been hospitalized owing to deteriorating health conditions and many of their lives are in imminent danger.

We urge the international community to take action to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease these deplorable practices and to heed the calls for the release of Palestinian prisoners and detainees and for respect for their human rights. Serious efforts must be made by the international community to compel Israel to comply with international law, including humanitarian law, specifically article 76 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, which clearly defines the rights of protected persons faced with detention by an occupying Power. The international community must ensure that the occupying Power acts humanely towards peaceful, non-violent hunger-striking prisoners and to release them and all other Palestinians who are being unlawfully and arbitrarily imprisoned and detained.

The international community cannot continue to absolve Israel, the occupying Power, of its responsibility for these violations and of its obligations under international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions. We call on the international community to act with urgency and responsibility to ensure the de-escalation of this perilous situation in Occupied Palestine, including in particular in Occupied East Jerusalem, and to bring a halt to the occupying Power's violations of international law, which are totally unjustifiable, remain the source of grave hardship and suffering of the Palestinian people, and seriously jeopardize the prospects for realizing a peaceful, just settlement on the basis of international law

and relevant United Nations resolutions and in accordance with the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 496 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 15 May 2014 (A/ES-10/628-S/2014/347), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda **Abdelhady-Nasser**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.